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Court Upholds Conviction In Reagan Threat

A federal appeals court has upheld the conviction of a Linden, Mich., man on charges of threatening President Ronald Reagan and of assaulting two CIA agents.

The defendant, James Anthony Vincent, had appealed his conviction and sentence of eight years in prison on grounds he didn't intend to carry through with the threat and that the trial court erred in admitting as evidence his post-arrest conduct.

Vincent had been arrested March 30, 1981, hours after the attempted assassination of Mr. Reagan in Washington, D.C. A phone call from his grandparents' home in Linden had indicated a second attempt would be made on the President's life.

Authorities learned later the

phone call had been made by another member of Vincent's family. But Vincent was charged in connection with a scuffle with CIA agents, during which he allegedly shouted threats against Mr. Reagan.

THE APPELLATE court said in its decision Wednesday, "A defendant may be convicted . . . even if he does not harbor an actual subjective intent to carry out his threat."

The three-judge panel, including Boice Martin Jr., Bailey Brown and John W. Peck, senior judge, said that since the Michigan incident occurred so soon after the Washington shooting, "a jury could find that a reasonable person would have taken Vincent's statements seriously."

On the admission of evidence, the judges said, "The trial judge, in the exercise of his discretion, apparently felt that the probative value of the challenged evidence outweighed the danger that it would result in unfair prejudice to the defendant."